

Ode To A Vermont Brook

That heart you see bumping
along up the mountain stream
belongs to me.

Fistsize butcher's meat
no color plate
the brown trout
find it sweet.

Look, there's an ear lying
careless in last year's leaves
an endless question mark.

Now it hops softly
as the wood thrush
joins being with
the evening dusk.

Those eyeballs, nerve ends
hanging like spaghetti from
the black cherry bloom.

Caress the wild yarrow
unfold the skunk cabbage
warm to the violets
in the morning dew.

Leap, heart,
attention, old ear
dream, eyes.

No one has bumped up this brook
as I have done each spring
genes in an uproar but the sun
licking at the willows.

Once I tried to marry
the entire state: one June
we fingered each other
and what I gave you took.

Monticello

We paid our dollar
the three of us
and advanced across
the lawn utterly charmed
by the salmon brick,
transcendent dome.

Tom, universal man,
what affection I have
for you and your

wind vane which you
read in bed, the campus
at Charlottesville
filling that grand head.
I listen for your laugh
and help drink
your sherry.

Beyond the glare of sun
on white facade
we walked the black
passage of the Negro quarters.
Tom, you who knew the world
so well, I hope you freed
your slaves in some last
testament. It will help
me free mine.

The Weight Of It

The weight of it
not the body
rather her all of it.
I loved her
but she was heavy.

Country dancing
my shadow, spare
intellectual
swung from the
elephant's tail.
Talking she swallowed me
her voice cold cider
on a Vermont afternoon
if that means anything
to you.

Three years later
watching her cross
Harvard Yard
part of me
fingered the scar.
I loved her.
She was heavy.

-- Robert F. Stowell

Christchurch, New Zealand